

Development and Validation of Supervisory and Organizational Support Measures

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## Abstract

Recruitment and retention of public child welfare workforce is in crisis due to turnover caused by 1) dissatisfaction with job; 2) excessive stress and burnout, including vicarious trauma; and 3) a lack of support from supervisors and organizations. No instrument was found to evaluate the impact of supervisory support and the use of organizational and professional strategies. The Supervisory and Organizational Support (SOS) survey instrument was created in response to the need for reliable and valid instruments to measure issues related to child welfare workforce turnover.

The purpose of this study was to investigate the psychometric properties of the SOS survey instrument and was designed to address the following research questions:

- 1) Does the instrument have demonstrated content validity?
- 2) Does the instrument have demonstrated construct validity as developed through factor analysis techniques?
- 3) Does the instrument have demonstrated reliability?
- 4) To what extent do the instrument and its' subscales correlate with measures of theoretically related and unrelated variables?

The results of this study with a sample of 387 employees in 18 Virginia Department of Social Services agencies provide good beginning evidence of content, construct, convergent, and discriminant validity, and reliability of the SOS survey instrument. As such, the SOS survey can be used in studies of social services workforce turnover/ retention. However, to increase confidence in this recommendation, further

research should address the implications and limitations of the current study and provide replication of the results with a different sample using confirmatory factor analysis.

Finally, the SOS survey instrument may serve to assist in the evaluation of practice and policy efforts aimed at increasing worker retention.

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